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TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 9812
INFO RUEHZG/NATO EU COLLECTIVE PRIORITY
RUEHBY/AMEMBASSY CANBERRA PRIORITY 2674
RUEHBUL/AMEMBASSY KABUL PRIORITY 0291
RUEKJCS/DIA WASHDC PRIORITY
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STATE FOR EUR/UBI, EUR/RPM, SCA
OSD FOR DANIEL FATA

E.O. 12958: DECL: 07/13/2017
TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PREL](#) [NATO](#) [AF](#) [NL](#)
SUBJECT: NETHERLANDS/AFGHANISTAN: EXTENSION REVIEW ON TRACK
REF: THE HAGUE 1329

Classified By: CDA Michael Gallagher, reasons 1.4 (b,d)

¶1. (C) The key ministers involved in the GONL decision to extend its ISAF mission in Uruzgan province approved July 12 "a way forward" to consult with NATO on various extension options. MFA Deputy Political Director Wim Geerts told Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense Daniel Fata July 13 that PM Balkenende and Foreign Minister Verhagen from the Christian Democratic Alliance (CDA), Deputy PM and Finance Minister Bos and Development Minister Koenders from the Labor Party (PvdA), and Deputy PM Minister for Youth and Family Affairs Rouvoet and Defense Minister van Middelkoop from the Christian Union -- also referred to as "The Six" -- agreed to allow GONL officials to informally consult with SACEUR and NATO on potentially identifying tasks that other Allies might be able to fill in Uruzgan. Filling these duties with contributions by other Allies would allow the GONL to reduce its military presence in Uruzgan, while at the same time maintain the lead in the province.

¶2. (C) Separately, MFA Director of Security Affairs Robert de Groot described the decision by "The Six" as a "very positive outcome" and a "greenlight to move forward." He said the decision, while "only a three millimeter step in the right direction," was nonetheless an important one, especially as it meant that PvdA leadership continues to keep an open mind regarding the possibility of an extension despite intense pressure from other leftist parties in the opposition to abandon the extension question.

¶3. (U) DASD Fata did not have the opportunity to clear this cable.

GALLAGHER